

Plenary: NIMH Priorities in Suicide Prevention: Through a COVID-19 Lens

12:50 - 2:00 PM

Jane Pearson, PhD

Jane Pearson, Ph.D., is the Special Advisor to the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) on Suicide Research. She leads the NIMH Suicide Research Team, overseeing the development of suicide research initiatives. Dr. Pearson assisted in the development of the first and second US Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Suicide. She led the development of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's Prioritized Research agenda. Dr. Pearson is an adjunct associate professor at Johns Hopkins University, and a Fellow of the American Psychological Association. She has had a private practice in clinical psychology, and has authored papers on suicide research needs, and the ethical challenges of suicide research.



Stephen O'Connor, PhD

Stephen O'Connor, Ph.D., is Chief of the Suicide Prevention Research Program in the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Division of Services and Intervention Research. Dr. O'Connor manages a portfolio of grants that includes projects on youth and adult-related suicide risk detection and interventions to reduce suicide ideation, attempts, and deaths. Prior to joining the NIMH, Dr. O'Connor conducted research focused on early intervention for suicide attempt survivors in trauma centers; group-based treatment for suicidal Veterans; and other health services-oriented efforts to improve screening, assessment, and treatment of suicidal individuals in both traditional and non-traditional behavioral health settings.

Crystal Barksdale, PhD

Dr. Crystal L. Barksdale is the Acting Deputy Director and Chief of the Minority Mental Health Research Program in the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Office for Disparities Research and Workforce Diversity. She provides guidance and expertise related to research on minority mental health and mental health disparities. Prior to joining NIMH, Dr. Barksdale worked at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, where she provided program evaluation leadership and subject matter expertise on children's mental health projects. Dr. Barksdale has also worked on projects focused on disparities in child-serving systems and culturally and linguistically appropriate interventions for at-risk youth and their families. She is a licensed clinical psychologist who maintains a client caseload in private practice, and is a Faculty Associate at Johns Hopkins University.

